



FACTS ABOUT SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE CESSATION



Another New Medicare Benefit

- On March 22, 2005 the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began covering smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling for certain people with Medicare to help them quit the habit.
- People with Medicare who have an illness caused or complicated by tobacco use, including heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, multiple cancers, lung disease, weak bones, blood clots, and cataracts can get coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation. These diseases account for the bulk of Medicare spending today. People with Medicare who take any of the many medications whose effectiveness is complicated by tobacco use—including insulin and some medicines for high blood pressure, blood clots and depression are also eligible.
- This new Medicare covered service builds on a series of the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) initiatives designed to help Americans quit smoking, including the opening of a new national quitline (1-800-QUITNOW) and designating all HHS campuses tobacco-free.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated that 9.3 percent of Americans age 65 and older smoke cigarettes. About 440,000 people die annually from smoking related diseases, with 300,000 of those deaths in those age 65 and older. CDC estimated in 2002 that 57 percent of smokers age 65 and older report a desire to quit. About 10 percent of elderly smokers quit each year with 1 percent relapsing.
- Researchers estimate that smoking accounts for approximately 10 percent of the total Medicare program costs or about \$20.5 billion in 1997.
- The U.S. Surgeon General has reported that quitting smoking leads to significant risk reduction and other health benefits, even in older adults who have smoked for years.
- Medicare's upcoming prescription drug coverage will provide certain smoking and tobacco use cessation treatments that are prescribed by a physician.

For more information on Medicare's coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation, go to our website: www.cms.hhs.gov and select "Partner with CMS." Go to "News and Events." Select "New Preventive Services Information—Toolkit."



M E D I C A R E ' S P R E V E N T I V E S E R V I C E S



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE CESSATION



Q Why is smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling important?

A The 2004 U.S. Surgeon General's report lists many diseases that have been found to be caused by tobacco use including coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, multiple cancers, pneumonia, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cough, bronchitis, cataracts, and low bone density in postmenopausal women. Approximately 440,000 people die annually from smoking related disease, with 300,000 of those deaths in those age 65 and older. Of those people age 65 years and older, it is estimated that 9.3 percent smoke cigarettes.

Q How will Medicare's new coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation help me stay healthy?

A The U.S. Surgeon General has reported that quitting smoking leads to significant risk reduction and other health benefits, even in older adults who have smoked for years.

Q Are all people with Medicare eligible to get coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation?

A People with Medicare who have an illness caused or complicated by tobacco use, including heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, multiple cancers, lung disease, weak bones, blood clots, and cataracts can get coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling. These diseases account for the bulk of Medicare spending today. People with Medicare who take any of the many medications whose effectiveness is complicated by tobacco use—including insulin and some medicines for high blood pressure, blood clots and depression are also eligible.

Q When will Medicare begin covering smoking and tobacco use cessation?

A The new coverage became effective March 22, 2005.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE CESSATION (cont.)

Q What smoking and tobacco use cessation services are covered?

A Medicare will cover two levels of counseling: (1) shorter visits (3-10 minutes each); and (2) longer visits (longer than 10 minutes each). You and your doctor decide whether you need shorter or longer visits.

Q How often does Medicare cover smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling?

A Medicare will pay up to two cessation attempts per year. This means you can get up to eight, of either the shorter or longer counseling sessions each year. You and your doctor can choose between shorter or longer cessation sessions for each attempt.

Q Who can provide smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling services?

A Qualified physicians or other Medicare-recognized practitioners can provide these counseling services.

Q How much will I have to pay?

A You pay 20 percent of the Medicare-approved amount after you meet the yearly Part B deductible (\$110 for 2005).

Q Which of these services will be covered under Medicare Part A or Part B?

A Shorter and longer smoking cessation counseling services on an inpatient or outpatient basis are covered under Medicare Part B. Inpatient hospital stay primarily for the purpose of providing smoking cessation services won't be covered under Medicare Part A.